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Philosophy Through Art: The Use of Literature, Film and Painting in Teaching Disciplines

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the relevance of integrating art into the teaching of philosophical disciplines as a component of the modernization of modern humanitarian education. In the context of competency-based and interdisciplinary approaches, which are increasingly being implemented in the European educational space, there is a growing need for methods that not only transfer knowledge, but also form critical thinking, emotional intelligence and value orientations of students. Literature, cinema and painting not only illustrate philosophical ideas, but also contribute to a deeper understanding of moral, worldview and existential problems, opening new paths to the formation of a humanitarian culture of the individual. The purpose of the study is to identify the pedagogical potential of art as a tool for teaching philosophical disciplines and to develop methodological approaches to its effective application in the conditions of modern higher education. The study found that the involvement of artistic means in teaching philosophy performs several important didactic functions – illustrative, motivational, heuristic and educational. Examples of the use of literary texts (philosophical dialogues, fiction, parables), cinematographic materials (fiction and documentary films), and visual works (paintings, graphics) within the educational process were considered. Forms of organizing educational activities were characterized, including: discussions, essays, role-playing games, “virtual galleries” and film seminars. It is proven that the use of art deepens the understanding of philosophical concepts, stimulates interpretive and critical thinking, increases the level of educational motivation and forms the ability to value analysis of cultural phenomena. The conclusions are drawn that the integration of art into the teaching of philosophy is an effective means of forming cognitive, emotional and axiological competencies of education seekers. The “philosophy through art” approach provides an understanding of complex concepts through artistic images, bringing theoretical knowledge closer to the personal experience of students. The prospects for further research are noted, in particular, empirical verification of the developed models taking into account digital learning formats, academic specialization and levels of training of higher education seekers.

KEYWORDS

philosophical education, interdisciplinary approach, art in education, literature, cinema, painting, didactic functions of art, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, competency-based approach, visualization, interactive learning, humanitarian education, philosophy through art.



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Філософія та управління

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Філософія через мистецтво: використання літератури, кіно та живопису при викладанні філософських дисциплін

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СТАТТЯ	АНОТАЦІЯ
Дослідницька DOI: 10.70651/3041-248X/2025.11.04 Авторське право © 2025 авторів Цей твір ліцензовано на умовах Ліцензії Creative Commons «Із Зазначенням Авторства – Некомерційна 4.0 Міжнародна» (CC BY-NC 4.0).	У статті проаналізовано актуальність інтеграції мистецтва при викладанні філософських дисциплін як складової модернізації сучасної гуманітарної освіти. У контексті компетентнісного та міждисциплінарного підходів, що дедалі ширше впроваджуються в європейському освітньому просторі, зростає потреба в методах, які не лише передають знання, а й формують критичне мислення, емоційний інтелект і ціннісні орієнтири здобувачів вищої освіти. Література, кінематограф і живопис не тільки ілюструють філософські ідеї, а й сприяють глибокому осмисленню моральних, світоглядних і екзистенційних проблем, відкриваючи нові шляхи до формування гуманітарної культури особистості. Метою дослідження є виявлення педагогічного потенціалу мистецтва як інструмента викладання філософських дисциплін і розроблення методичних підходів до його ефективного застосування в умовах сучасної вищої освіти. У ході дослідження з'ясовано, що залучення художніх засобів при вивченні філософських дисциплін виконує низку важливих дидактичних функцій – ілюстративну, мотиваційну, евристичну та виховну. Розглянуто приклади використання літературних текстів (філософських діалогів, художньої прози, притч), кінематографічних матеріалів (художніх і документальних фільмів), візуальних творів (живопису, графіки) у межах навчального процесу. Охарактеризовано форми організації навчальної діяльності, серед яких: дискусії, есе, рольові ігри, «віртуальні галереї» та кіносемінари. Доведено, що застосування мистецтва поглиблює осмислення філософських понять, стимулює інтерпретаційне та критичне мислення, підвищує рівень навчальної мотивації та формує здатність до ціннісного аналізу культурних явищ. Сформовано висновки, що інтеграція мистецтва у викладання філософії є ефективним засобом формування когнітивної, емоційної та аксіологічної компетентностей здобувачів освіти. Підхід «філософія через мистецтво» забезпечує осмислення складних концептів через художні образи, наближаючи теоретичні знання до особистісного досвіду студентів. Зазначено перспективність подальших досліджень, зокрема емпіричної перевірки розроблених моделей із урахуванням цифрових форматів навчання, академічної спеціалізації та рівнів підготовки здобувачів вищої освіти.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА

філософська освіта, міждисциплінарний підхід, мистецтво в освіті, література, кінематограф, живопис, дидактичні функції мистецтва, критичне мислення, емоційний інтелект, компетентнісний підхід, візуалізація, інтерактивне навчання, гуманітарна освіта, філософія через мистецтво.

1. Introduction

Modern education is in the phase of active search for innovative teaching methods aimed at the formation of a holistic personality and the development of critical thinking. One of the promising areas is the integration of art into the teaching of humanitarian disciplines, in particular philosophy. Philosophy traditionally has a close connection with art, since fiction, cinema and painting not only reflect philosophical ideas, but also act as a means of knowing them. In the context of the competence approach and interdisciplinarity, there is a need to involve various cultures of knowledge, including science, art and epistemology, in the educational process [7; 14]. The use of art in teaching philosophy meets this need because artistic images affect the emotional and aesthetic sphere of students' consciousness, stimulating them to comprehend the meaning of human relations and spiritual life more deeply. This contributes to the approximation of abstract ideas to the perception of students [8; 16].

The integration of literature, film and painting in the teaching of philosophy and interdisciplinary courses is relevant for several reasons. Firstly, such integration helps to increase students' motivation, since the educational material is presented more interestingly and visually. Secondly, the use of art stimulates the development of creative and critical thinking, empathy and emotional intelligence, which are necessary characteristics for a modern personality, as noted by researchers in Ukraine and the world. Thirdly, the proposed approach corresponds to modern trends in European education, where multi- and transdisciplinary teaching methods aimed at forming a holistic system of humanitarian knowledge are becoming more and more important. Thus, the use of art in teaching philosophy acts as a component of the general process of modernization of educational practices.

2. Literature Review

The problems of the synthesis of art and education attract the attention of researchers in the field of philosophy of education, pedagogy and teaching methods. In recent years, several works have appeared on both the general methodological foundations of interdisciplinary learning and specific methods of using art in the educational process.

The collective monograph edited by G. P. Shevchenko summarizes theoretical and practical approaches to the process of educating the personality of culture by means of art. The publication substantiates that the complex involvement of various types of art, in particular literature, fine arts, music, and theater, contributes to the formation of worldview positions and value orientations of young people. Particular attention is paid to the educational potential of fiction and visual artistic images, which provide a deeper understanding of complex socio-cultural phenomena. It is noted that the emotional involvement caused by a work of art activates the cognitive activity of students and increases the efficiency of assimilation of educational material [4]. Similar provisions are presented in the work of M. V. Vydryhan, devoted to the methodological foundations of teaching philosophy in higher education institutions. The study emphasizes the feasibility of using visualization tools, in particular illustrations, diagrams, video materials and educational films, in order to deepen the understanding of philosophical ideas, as well as to increase the level of cognitive motivation and the effectiveness of the educational process [3].

In addition, M. Vydryhan emphasizes the need to include in the course of philosophy a list of primary sources that are mandatory for students to master [3]. On the other hand, fiction – novels, stories, parables – can serve as an illustration of philosophical ideas. N. V. Hohol, in a historical and methodological study, showed that back in the 1980s in Ukraine, a culturological approach to teaching literature was substantiated, which provided for the complex use of related arts (painting, graphics, cinema) in the classroom [5]. Despite the fact that the study is devoted to literary education in secondary schools, its conclusions are also relevant for philosophical education. It is noted that in the process of analyzing a work of art, the teacher should direct the cognitive activity of students from verbal art to related visual forms, which contributes to a deeper understanding of its semantic content. Current scientific research confirms the effectiveness of including works of art in the teaching of ethics, aesthetics and philosophy of culture, as it allows students to immerse themselves in the problem field of the subject more personally and form an emotionally colored philosophical perception. A work of art becomes a “testing ground” for moral and value searches. Thus, the comparison of a literary work with its interpretations in other arts – film adaptations, illustrations – helps to better understand the author's

intention and the inner world of images, which is fully consistent with the principles of inter-artistic interaction described in scientific research [5; 15].

The integration of art into the teaching of philosophy is realized through the analysis of primary sources and the use of works of art to comprehend moral, existential and ideological problems.

Cinema as an educational tool has a significant emotional and cognitive potential. In particular, the film "The Sea Inside" actualizes the topic of euthanasia in bioethics courses. A similar practice is used in the "Cinema and Medicine" projects (Germany) and in the educational initiatives of the Kennedy Institute of Ethics (USA). In Ukraine, cinema is effectively used in the themes of postmodern philosophy.

Fine arts also have significant educational potential. According to M. Vydryhan, visual images activate emotional and aesthetic perception and contribute to a deeper understanding of philosophical ideas [4]. In the textbook by M. Fürst and J. Trinks, illustrations of paintings by artists are accompanied by philosophical concepts [15]. N. E. Myropolska substantiates the expediency of using painting for the formation of the value and semantic sphere of the personality [9]. In practice, this is realized through the demonstration of reproductions illustrating philosophical eras and trends [19].

Thus, the involvement of art in the educational process in philosophy contributes to a deeper assimilation of knowledge, the development of empathy and interdisciplinary thinking.

3. Problem Statement

The purpose of the study is to identify and theoretically substantiate the possibilities of using art-literature, cinema, and painting as an effective tool for teaching philosophical disciplines in the context of modern education.

4. Methods and Materials

The methodological basis of the study is interdisciplinary and integrative approaches that combine philosophy, art and pedagogy. The paper uses analytical, hermeneutic and comparative methods to identify how literature, cinema and painting can serve as effective tools in teaching philosophical disciplines.

The research carried out is of a qualitative nature and is based on an interdisciplinary approach. The method of theoretical analysis was applied – more than 10 scientific sources (monographs, articles, textbooks) covering the philosophy of education, pedagogy, and cultural studies were processed. A comparative analysis of domestic and foreign experience has been carried out. To specify the theoretical provisions, the case-study method was used.

The materials of the study were: (1) official documents and curricula in philosophy (for the analysis of standards and goals of education); (2) scientific publications of Ukrainian scientists given in the literature review (they provided a theoretical foundation); (3) generalization of the experience of practicing teachers; (4) author's observations and developments from his own teaching practice (tested elements of classes using art).

In the process of research, the principles of scientificity, consistency and cultural relevance were observed

The analytical method is used to identify philosophical concepts, categories and concepts embedded in works of art. The hermeneutic method made it possible to interpret artistic images and symbols in the context of philosophical thought, to reveal their educational and ideological potential. The comparative method is used to establish the relationship between philosophical theories and artistic interpretations of different cultural and historical eras.

The empirical part of the study is the selection and analysis of specific literary, cinematographic and pictorial works that reflect key philosophical ideas relevant for modern education. These include classical and modern models, which raise issues of ethics, the meaning of human existence, freedom of choice, and interaction between the individual and society.

The study also uses elements of pedagogical experimentation and observation aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of the use of art materials in the educational process. Educational scenarios and cases are developed to test how the involvement of art affects the development of philosophical thinking, critical analysis and emotional engagement of students.

Thus, the chosen methodological approach provides a comprehensive study of the educational potential of art in teaching philosophy and justifies the feasibility of integrating art materials into the modern educational process.

5. Results and Discussion

The analysis of the educational process shows that the involvement of literature, cinema and fine arts performs several key didactic functions in the teaching of philosophical disciplines. One of the leading ones is the function of illustrative and visual support, which contributes to the concretization of abstract theoretical provisions. Since philosophical ideas are often difficult to perceive due to the high level of abstraction, art allows them to be presented in the form of visual or plot images. For example, in order to reveal the principles of Stoic ethics, it is advisable to use literary or cinematic examples, where the character demonstrates endurance and inner stability, which allows for a deeper assimilation of the idea of a Stoic attitude to trials.

The next important function is motivational, which is realized through the ability of art to evoke an emotional response, increase cognitive interest and form a positive attitude to the educational material.

Increasing the emotional involvement of students, in particular by showing fragments of feature films or reading literary passages, helps to increase cognitive interest and increase internal educational motivation [3].

The heuristic function is realized through the ability of art to actualize the search for hidden meanings. In the process of discussing paintings or poetry within the framework of philosophical seminars, there is a development of interpretive skills, the formation of the ability to philosophical analysis, hypothetical thinking and symbolic comprehension of a cultural text.

The educational function of art is to influence the value and worldview orientations of students. According to N. Tymonik, the use of art significantly increases the educational potential of literary works and has a positive effect on the moral development of the individual [13]. In the student audience, aesthetic experience is able to initiate the processes of ideological rethinking, actualize the internal moral conflict and contribute to emotional catharsis in the Aristotelian sense.

Thus, art in philosophical education functions at three interrelated levels: cognitive, emotional and axiological, providing an integrative approach to the formation of a philosophical worldview.

Literary texts can be integrated into philosophical education in several main areas. The first of them involves reading and analyzing philosophical primary sources: Plato's dialogues, treatises by R. Descartes, works by G. Skovoroda and others. This approach is traditional and enshrined in the curricula in philosophy in higher education institutions. In particular, the courses contain fragments from Plato's "Republic", Aristotle's "Metaphysics", I. Kant's "Critique of Practical Reason". The study confirms the feasibility of this practice: acquaintance with original texts, despite their conceptual complexity, contributes to the formation of skills of independent thinking and understanding of the historical and cultural context. As M. Vydryhan notes, the training course of philosophy should contain a list of philosophical works for mandatory study by students [3].

The second approach is the use of fiction that raises philosophical problems. We are talking about two types of texts: specially created on the border of philosophy and literature (parables, philosophical short stories, dystopias) and classical works of fiction with deep ideological content. Thus, A. Camus' novel "The Plague" effectively illustrates the ideas of existentialism, and the analysis of the characters' reactions to the absurdity of the epidemic makes it possible to better understand the concept of "rebellion" as a form of philosophical resistance, described in his essay "The Myth of Sisyphus". The dystopia of J. Orwell's "1984" demonstrates the key provisions of the philosophy of totalitarianism: control over consciousness, suppression of free will, and manipulation of truth. It is advisable to use it within the framework of modules on social or political philosophy.

Ukrainian literature also has a significant potential for philosophical understanding. In particular, Lesya Ukrainka's poem "The Forest Song" raises the themes of freedom, love and choice; short stories by V. Pidmohylnyi – the problem of internal alienation of a person in urban space; T. Shevchenko's poetry – deep existential motives, for example, fate, justice, personal purpose. The integration of such texts into classes on ethics, philosophy of culture, or the history of ideas not only enriches the interdisciplinary approach but also deepens the connection of philosophical education with the national cultural context.

The practical implementation of the literary-centric approach in teaching philosophical disciplines can be carried out through several methodological forms focused on the development of interpretive thinking and philosophical reflection. These forms include:

- joint reading and analytical discussion of a text fragment, in which students are offered an excerpt of an artistic or philosophical work with the subsequent formulation of questions aimed at identifying the ideological content and philosophical concepts;
- essays or individual written tasks, the content of which involves a reasoned understanding of the actions of the characters through the prism of certain philosophical trends (for example: stoicism, utilitarianism, existentialism);
- role-playing interaction or staging fragments of texts, which is especially appropriate when working through Plato's dialogues or philosophical parables, since this form of activity activates perception, stimulates emotional and value involvement and encourages improvisational modeling of argumentation.

An important aspect of this approach is the creation of conditions for philosophical polylogue, since the literary text opens up a multidimensional space for interpretations, where students form different semantic visions, and pedagogical moderation provides methodological support in their philosophical comprehension. This format corresponds to the concept of Socratic dialogue, implementing it in the context of modern educational practice.

The use of film materials in the process of teaching philosophical disciplines involves taking into account two key aspects: the appropriate thematic selection of films and the use of active forms of their further analysis [17; 18]. According to the analysis, the content of film production should directly correlate with the topic of a particular lesson. In particular, when studying ethical issues, it is advisable to watch and further comprehend films that highlight moral dilemmas. For example, the films "Knock on Heaven" (the value of life and death), "Mercy" (the issue of forgiveness), and "12 Angry Men" (justice and prejudice) create the basis for a critical rethinking of ethical categories in a philosophical context.

In the case of studying the problems of consciousness, it is relevant to involve science fiction films in the educational process, such as "The Matrix" (dir. Wachowski), which serves as a metaphor for philosophical questions of reality, illusion and cognitive experience. To comprehend the problems of free will and determinism, the dramatic film "The Edge of the Future" is appropriate, the plot of which is built around the recurrence of events and the theme of choice as a factor of personal responsibility.

Within the framework of pedagogical interaction, it is important to focus students' attention on the fact that the film in this context is considered not as a form of entertainment, but as a philosophical text that is subject to deep analysis at the level of symbolism, subtexts and ideological messages. It is advisable to implement such an analysis in the format of a guided discussion or an interactive cinematographic seminar.

After the review, a collective discussion takes place, during which the teacher plays the role of a facilitator, directing the discussion to philosophically significant conclusions, based on the interpretations of the students themselves. An important component of the effectiveness of this technique is the phenomenon of the "presence effect", thanks to which students immerse themselves in the plot situation and live it together with the characters, which contributes to the development of empathy and a deeper understanding of moral, existential and epistemological problems.

It should be noted that the use of cinema is not limited to watching entire films in class (which is not always possible due to time). It is more rational to use fragments – key scenes or short films. In the digital age, the teacher can prepare a clip with the selected episode in advance or give a link to students for self-viewing before the lesson. For example, on the topic "The Problem of Justice", you can invite students to watch a short cartoon, "Judge by Conscience" at home and discuss its plot at the seminar through the prism of the concepts of justice by Plato and John Rawls.

The integration of fine arts into the teaching of philosophical disciplines is realized both by illustrating lectures and practical classes with artistic visual materials and by organizing specialized classes that combine philosophical ideas with aesthetic analysis. In the process of lecture presentation, the teacher can demonstrate slides with reproductions of works of art that thematically correspond to the content of the lesson. For example, within the study of the philosophy of the Enlightenment, it is advisable to involve the portrait of Voltaire by Jean-Antoine Houdon or the painting "The Oath of the Horaces" by Jacques-Louis David as visual representations of the ideals of rationalism, civic duty and heroic stoicism. This approach ensures the formation of students' visual associations with key historical figures and concepts, which contributes to a deeper understanding of philosophical ideas.

The use of allegorical images is also an effective didactic tool: William Hogarth's engravings from the series "Fashionable Marriage" are used to illustrate the problems of public morality of the XVIII century, and Michelangelo's fresco "The Creation of Adam" is used to actualize the philosophical and religious problems of creationism, free will and anthropocentrism.

In addition to demonstrating artistic images within the framework of lectures, an effective form is conducting classes in the format of a "virtual gallery", which has been tested as an optional form of work with philosophy students. This format involves the preliminary selection of several reproductions of paintings, each of which becomes the object of group philosophical analysis. For example, a group of students analyzes Edvard Munch's painting "The Scream" through the prism of existentialist philosophy, focusing on the motifs of inner despair and ontological loneliness.

The final stage of the lesson involves the presentation of the results of the analysis by all participants, which transforms the educational event into an interdisciplinary seminar, where aesthetic, historical, cultural and philosophical approaches are synthesized. According to students, this form of work increases the level of engagement, contributes to better memorization of the material and activates imaginative thinking.

A teacher can show students a mysterious or provocative work (for example, R. Magritte's painting "This Is Not a Pipe" with the caption "Betrayal of Images") and ask the question: What meaning did the author want to convey? Do you agree with this statement? This leads the group to discuss the problem of the correspondence of the word and reality, sign and signified – in fact, the beginning of a philosophical discussion about language, reality and illusion.

Intellectual activation of students through the interpretation of a work of art contributes to the development of analytical thinking skills, logical argumentation and the formation of personal judgments. In the process of such analysis, students must formulate their own interpretation of the artistic image and justify it with a logically consistent system of evidence or facts that appeal to the aesthetic context, historical and cultural background, or philosophical ideas. This approach conceptually echoes the Socratic method, which involves the gradual derivation of the interlocutor to the truth through questioning and reflective thinking.

In modern pedagogical literature, such methods are referred to as art pedagogy or art-centric learning, within which art performs the function of a trigger or catalyst for thinking activity. As noted by S. I. Babina and O. V. Krasilnikova [1, p. 7], interdisciplinary educational courses such as "Literature and Philosophy", "Philosophy and Art History" are actively introduced in the higher education systems of Western Europe and North America, which provides students with an integral vision of humanitarian knowledge, contributes to the expansion of worldview horizons and in-depth understanding of philosophical categories through the prism of artistic practice.

The Ukrainian system of higher education also demonstrates tendencies towards the integration of philosophical and art science components, for example, interdisciplinary courses, special seminars on the philosophy of art, as well as elective disciplines focused on the synthesis of theoretical and visual-aesthetic knowledge are introduced.

The presented results are consistent with global trends in the development of humanitarian education focused on integrating content and increasing its practical potential [5]. The integration of art into the process of teaching philosophical disciplines contributes to the effective implementation of the competence approach, which provides for the formation of not only the cognitive sphere of students, but also the development of personal qualities. In particular, the development of the following is ensured:

- cognitive competence (the ability to think critically, logically justify a position);
- socio-emotional competence (ability to empathize, emotional empathy);
- cultural competence (assessment of artistic phenomena, understanding of their philosophical depth).

As noted by S. I. Babina and O. V. Krasilnikova, modern philosophical education should be aimed not only at the formation of intellectual potential, but also at the development of emotional sensitivity and creative thinking [1, p. 10]. In this context, the proposed approach "philosophy through art" turns out to be an effective tool for the development of students' creative potential by working out artistic images that function as interpretive models of philosophical categories.

At the same time, the introduction of innovative methods can be accompanied by a number of challenges. Thus, an important condition for the effectiveness of art-integrated classes is a high level of training of the teacher, who must have a deep knowledge of the content of the artistic material, provide

for the variability of interpretations and be ready for flexible moderation of the discussion. It is necessary to maintain a balance between the freedom of philosophical reflection and the achievement of the educational goal [6].

A separate aspect that requires attention is the objective assessment of educational achievements within the framework of creative tasks (essay based on a literary work, philosophical presentation based on an artistic image, etc.). In order to ensure pedagogical justice, it is necessary to develop an assessment system that integrates two components, namely: subject knowledge (correctness of the use of philosophical terms, compliance with the logic of analysis) and creativity of thinking (originality of conclusions, depth of interpretation). This approach will allow you to adequately assess the student's individual contribution and the level of assimilation of philosophical concepts in the context of interdisciplinary interaction [2; 10].

As noted by researchers [4; 11; 12], the successful integration of artistic components into philosophical education requires careful methodological training, as well as a rational redistribution of study time.

Thus, the results obtained testify to the effectiveness of the approach "philosophy through art" as a promising direction of philosophical didactics. Literary texts, cinematographic works and samples of visual art, subject to careful thought-out selection and proper methodological support, can act as full-fledged tools of the educational process. Their integration into the educational space will contribute not only to the deepening of theoretical knowledge, but also to the formation of cognitive, emotional and cultural involvement of students. In this way, philosophy appears not only as an academic discipline but as a living intellectual practice, relevant to the modern experience of the individual, which greatly increases the motivation to study it.

6. Conclusions

The analysis of modern sources confirms that the involvement of literature, cinema and visual art contributes to the implementation of interdisciplinary and competence-based approaches, activates the cognitive and emotional-value sphere of students, deepens the understanding of philosophical concepts and forms the ability to critically comprehend cultural phenomena. The proposed approach, "Philosophy through Art" opens up new opportunities for humanitarian education, meeting the challenges of interdisciplinarity and contributing to the education of a harmonious, aesthetically sensitive and culturally oriented personality.

Prospects for further research in the context of the topic are the development and empirical testing of models for the integration of artistic means into philosophical education, taking into account the specialization of applicants, levels of academic training and the peculiarities of the digital educational environment.

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